

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-25 (Canceled)

26. (Currently Amended) A method for drilling a well in a coal seam, comprising:
pumping a drilling fluid comprising a liquid down a drill string to a bit drilling a well
bore in a coal seam; and
reducing downhole pressure exerted by the drilling fluid.

27. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 26, further comprising reducing
down-hole pressure exerted by the drilling fluid by lightening the hydrostatic pressure of the
drilling fluid.

28. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 26, further comprising reducing
down-hole pressure exerted by the drilling fluid by gas lift.

29. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 26, further comprising reducing
down-hole pressure exerted by the drilling fluid by aerating the drilling fluid.

30. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 26, further comprising reducing
down-hole pressure exerted by the drilling fluid by circulating compressed air and mixing the air
with the drilling fluid.

31. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 26, further comprising reducing down-hole pressure exerted by the drilling fluid by pumping the drilling fluid to the surface with a down-hole pump.

32. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 26, further comprising reducing down-hole pressure to nearly zero.

33. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 26, further comprising reducing down-hole pressure below over balanced conditions.

34. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 26, further comprising reducing down-hole pressure to approximately 150-200 pounds per square inch.

35. (Currently amended) A method of forming a well in a coal seam, comprising:
drilling a well including a horizontal bore in a coal seam using a drilling fluid comprising liquid; and

reducing the down-hole pressure sufficiently that drilling conditions are not over
balanced for drilling of the horizontal bore.

36. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 35, wherein the well comprises a
horizontal drainage pattern including the horizontal bore.

37. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 36, further comprising reducing the
down-hole pressure sufficiently that drilling conditions are under balanced for drilling of the
horizontal drainage pattern.

38. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 35, wherein the coal seam is porous
and fractured.

39. (Currently amended) A method for producing gas from a coal seam, comprising:
drilling using a drilling fluid comprising liquid with drilling conditions that are not over
balanced a horizontal well bore in a coal seam; and
producing gas collected by the horizontal well bore to the surface.

40. (Currently amended) A method for accessing a ~~subterranean zone~~ coal seam from the surface, comprising:
drilling a well bore in a ~~subterranean zone~~ coal seam; and
during drilling, pumping drilling fluid comprising liquid and cuttings from the well bore to the surface.

41. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 40, whereby hydrostatic pressure on the subterranean zone is reduced during drilling.

42. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 40, wherein the well bore comprises a first well bore, further comprising pumping drilling fluid and cuttings from the well bore to the surface through a second well bore.

43. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 42, wherein the second well bore comprises a substantially vertical well bore.

44. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 42, wherein the first well bore comprises an articulated well bore.

45. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 40, wherein drilling the well bore comprises drilling a main horizontal bore and a plurality of lateral bores.

46. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 40, wherein the subterranean zone comprises a pressure below 150 pounds per square inch (psi).

47. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 40, wherein the subterranean zone comprises a coal seam.

48. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 40, further comprising pumping drilling fluid and cuttings from the well bore to the surface using a downhole pump.

49. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 40, further comprising pumping drilling fluid and cuttings from the well bore to the surface using gas lift.

50. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 40, whereby drilling is accomplished without loss of drilling fluids into the subterranean zone and plugging the subterranean zone.

51. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 42, the first and second well bores intersecting one another at a junction, further comprising pumping drilling fluid and cuttings from proximate to the junction of the first and second well bores to the surface.

52. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 51, wherein the junction comprises a cavity.

53. (Currently amended) A method for underbalanced drilling of a coal formation, comprising:
drilling a substantially horizontal well bore in the coal seam; and
during drilling of the substantially horizontal well bore in the coal formation, pumping drilling fluid comprising liquid and cuttings from the substantially horizontal well bore to the surface.

54. (Currently amended) A method for accessing a subterranean coal formation from the surface, comprising:

drilling a substantially horizontal well bore in the coal formation; and
during drilling of the substantially horizontal well bore in the coal formation, lightening hydrostatic pressure exerted by drilling fluids on the coal formation, the drilling fluids comprising liquid.

55. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 54, further comprising lightening hydrostatic pressure exerted by the drilling fluids by pumping the drilling fluids from the substantially horizontal well bore to the surface.

56. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 55, further comprising pumping the drilling fluids using a downhole pump.

57. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 55, further comprising pumping the drilling fluids using gas lift.

58. (Previously presented) The method of Claim 55, further comprising pumping drilling fluids from the substantially horizontal well bore to the surface through a second well bore intercepting a substantially horizontal well bore.

59. (New) The method of Claim 29 wherein pumping a drilling fluid comprising a liquid down a drill string comprises pumping a drilling mud down the drill string.

60. (New) The method of Claim 35 wherein drilling a well including a horizontal bore in a coal seam using a drilling fluid comprising liquid comprises using a drilling mud.

61. (New) The method of Claim 40 wherein pumping drilling fluid comprising liquid comprises pumping drilling mud.

62. (New) The method of Claim 54 wherein lightening hydrostatic pressure exerted by drilling fluids comprises lightening hydrostatic pressure exerted by drilling mud.